A lush green forest with a dirt path leading through ferns and tall trees. The scene is bright and verdant, with sunlight filtering through the canopy.

Health Equity and Access

**Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors
July 2019**

Barton Robison, MPA
Director, Oregon Health & Outdoors
Initiative

Oregon Health & Outdoors Initiative

Mission: Improve health and the environment for all Oregonians by increasing access to and engagement with nature among communities experiencing inequities.



Providence
CORE
Oregon Office on
Disability & Health



What Do We Do?

We build collaborative groups to tackle community health inequities through nature.



Definitions

What is health?

Health is "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." (World Health Organization)



Definitions

What is nature? What counts as “outdoor recreation”?

Nature is more difficult to define (but here are some typical characteristics):

- An area containing elements of living systems
- Range of scales and degrees of human management
- Is relative



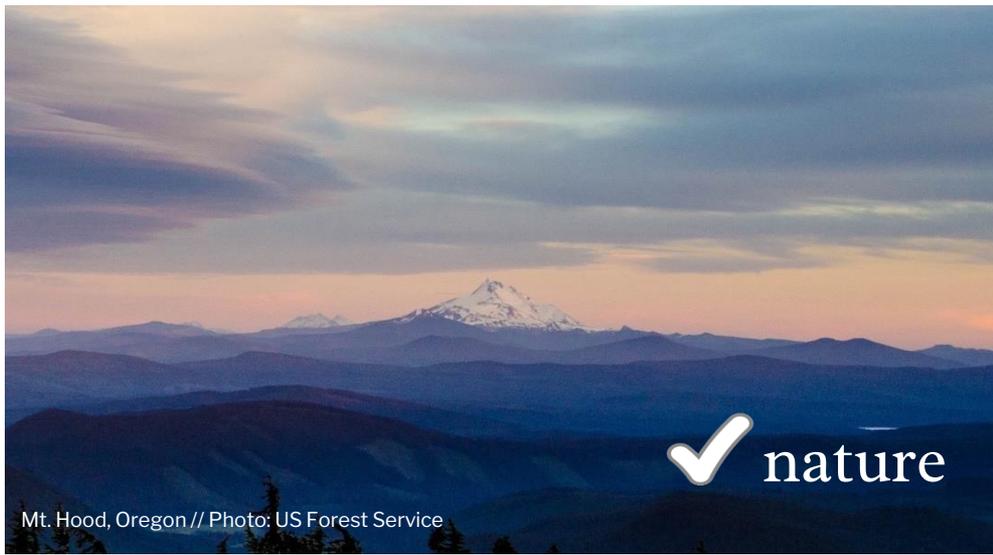
Close your eyes and picture
“nature”

✓ nature



Lake Creek, Oregon // Photo: Bonnie Moreland

✓ nature



Mt. Hood, Oregon // Photo: US Forest Service

✓ nature



Photo: Legacy Health

✓ nature



Portland International Raceway // Photo: Adaptive Sports Northwest

Definitions

What is health equity?

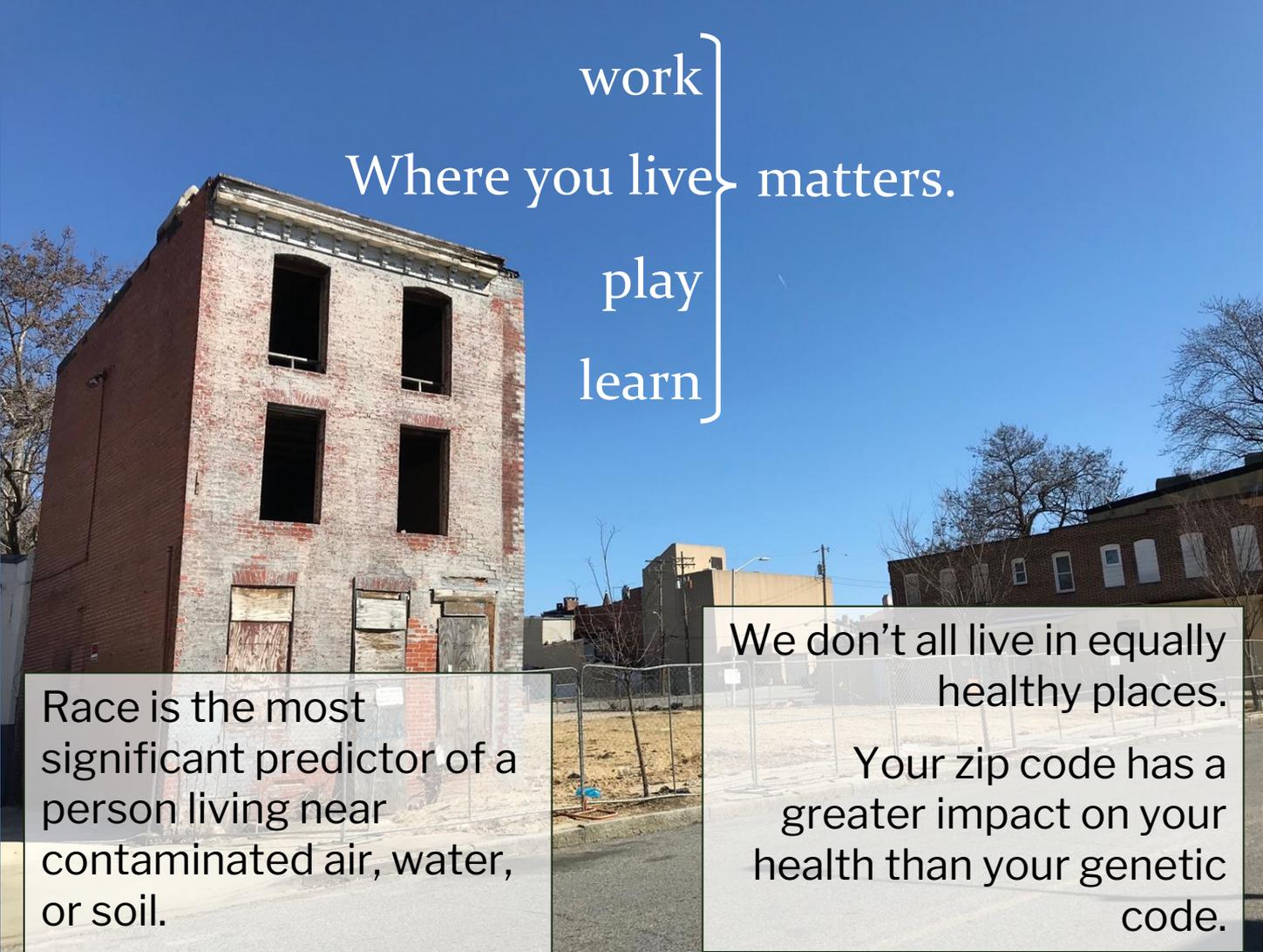
Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

Equity \neq Equality



Your environment matters.





work

Where you live } matters.

play

learn

Race is the most significant predictor of a person living near contaminated air, water, or soil.

We don't all live in equally healthy places.

Your zip code has a greater impact on your health than your genetic code.

Health disparities in Oregon

Multnomah Co. African American infant mortality 2x white infant mortality

33% Lake Co. residents are obese (compared to 27% statewide)

Asthma: 17.6% of Native Americans, 11.2% of whites

Diabetes: 19% of Latina women, 6.8% of white women

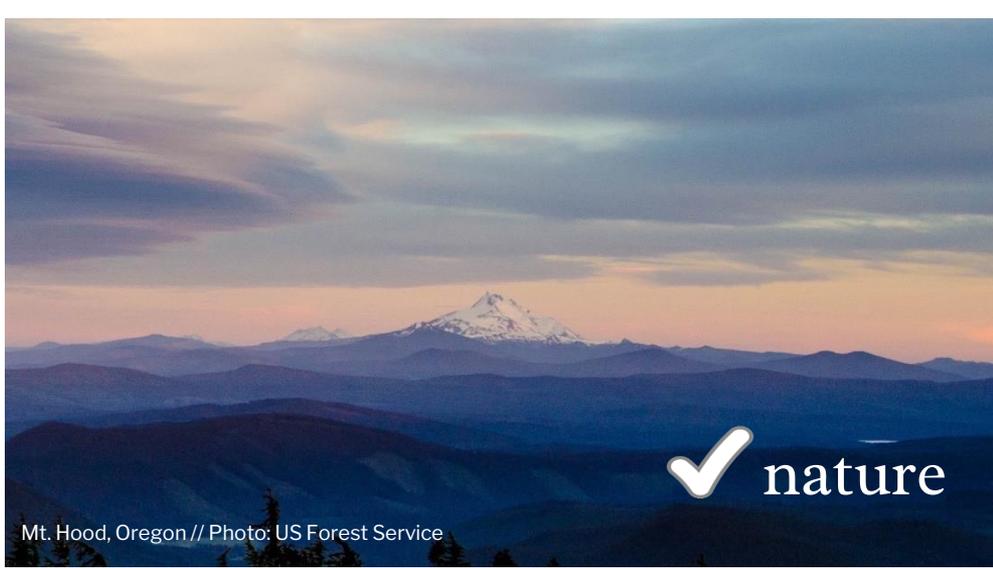
Whose voices are here?
Whose are missing?

Who is defining “outdoor
recreation”?

✓ nature



Lake Creek, Oregon // Photo: Bonnie Moreland



Mt. Hood, Oregon // Photo: US Forest Service

✓ nature

✓ nature



Photo: Legacy Health



Portland International Raceway // Photo: Adaptive Sports Northwest

✓ nature

Recommendation #1: Funded Grants for CBOs Already Doing This Work

- These groups already exist in Oregon, and they're largely doing their work for free.
- Unlike NM Outdoor Equity Bill, make grants non-prescriptive to allow CBOs to determine community need.
- Opportunity to help drive economic development directly into these communities instead of into industry.

Recommendation #2: Require Robust EDI Training for Outdoor Professionals in State Agencies

- Fear and discrimination are more powerful barriers than equipment, ignorance, etc.
- Change is happening in historically white-led organizations/agencies, but not quickly enough.
- People will not access the outdoors in places they do not feel safe.

